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AUTHOR Deever, R. Merwin; Gibson, G. Jim
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ABSTRACT

This study consists of a list of guidelines for the implementation and operation of a year-round school program. The list was developed from a survey of 120 school administrators, functioning at the superintendent, district, and unit school levels, who are involved in 45-15 year-round programs in 16 school districts throughout the country. These administrators ranked 50 items identified in the literature as commonly included in the planning and implementation of year-round school programs. The resulting guidelines are presented in two categories--essential procedures for implementation and operation, and recommended procedures for implementation and operation. These guidelines cover areas such as finance, facilities, staffing needs, and public relations. (DS)

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GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION AND OPERATION OF A YEAR ROUND SCHOOL PROGRAM

A Summary of a Doctoral Dissertation by

Margaret Lorraine Hewes Smith

Prepared by

R. Merwin Deever

and

G. Jim Gibson

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R. Merwin Deever, Director
College of Education
Arizona State University
Tempe, Arizona 85281

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FOREWORD

This study is the third issue of Research Reports on Educational Administration in this its sixth volume year. First published in 1971, R.R.E.A. has brought current and concise research to the desks of Arizona school administrators. The current issue is the twenty-eighth in the continuing series.

Each year, topics which may be of greatest current interest to administrators in Arizona are identified from among the doctoral dissertations produced by the Department of Educational Administration and Supervision at Arizona State University. These topics are then summarized and appear in Research Reports on Educational Administration. The issues are distributed to administrators throughout the state of Arizona.

A list of titles in this series which are available from the Bureau of Educational Research and Services is included on the inside back cover. They are also available in microform from Xerox University Microfilm, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48106.

The dissertation by Margaret Smith developed a set of guidelines for the implementation and operation of a year round school program.

A commonality of response among administrators was found by the researcher through the utilization of a descriptive research survey. The degree of commonality was sufficient to warrant the establishment of the guidelines. These guidelines will assist districts considering or entering the implementation of a year round school program.

R.M.D.
G.J.G.

GUIDELINES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION AND OPERATION OF A YEAR ROUND SCHOOL PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

Population movement, varied periods of employment and recreation, increased demand for service from education, increased costs of construction and operation of schools and the need to accelerate and individualize learning combine to create the need for the public school to provide flexible patterns of school attendance. Solutions to these problems are difficult without alternative means of educating individuals. To quote Robert M. Beckworth,

> The toughest question facing us now...is whether we have the courage and flexibility and imagination to innovate as the times require. Let us not deceive ourselves. The old ways of doing things are not good enough. But giving up the old ways will be painful. Institutions fear change. In the face of change we all grow defensive, we all move toward protecting our particular vested interests. But the overriding vested interest of all of us is in the vitality of American education. This is the precious thing we hold in trust.

THE PROBLEM

This study had as its stated purpose the development of a set of guidelines for the implementation and operation of a year round school program. To solve this problem the study determined whether or not there were statistically significant differences among responses from three levels of administrators who have been involved in the establishment and management of operational 45-15 year round school programs. The three levels of administrators represented were: 1) superintendency, 2) district level, and 3) unit school level.

PROCEDURES

The descriptive survey research design was utilized in this study. There were 120 subjects participating in the study, all of whom were 45-15 year round school administrators from 16 school districts throughout the United States.

Each year round school administrator responded to each of 50 items identified from the literature as commonly included in the planning and management of year round school programs. Each participant was asked to rate each of the 50 statements on a five point rating scale.

The responses were tabulated according to the respondents' administrative levels and expected frequencies were compiled for each item. A chi square analysis was used to analyze the data. Differences were sought at the .05 level of significance.

The number of responses for each area of year round school operation was tabulated by rank and observed frequencies were translated into proportion of the total response for each item.

Proportional totals were listed in rank order from highest to lowest and from this ranking a set of guidelines was established. The established guidelines included 17 essential procedures and 31 recommended procedures for the implementation and operation of a year round school program.

FINDINGS

Statistically significant differences were found among the three levels of administrators in the response to six of the 50 items in the questionnaire. One of the six items was a planning procedure concerning mandatory pupil participation for maximum space economy. The other five items were management procedures concerning:

a) student per capita costs
b) student population projections
c) increased furniture and equipment replacement
d) teacher-pupil ratios for elementary classrooms
e) the employment of attendance or office clerks for year round facilities.

Differences among the three levels of administrators ranged from one to forty-nine percent. The greater differences were found between members of the superintendency and unit school administrator groups. There was sufficient commonality of responses among administrators to warrant the establishment of a set of guidelines for the implementation and operation of a year round school program.

CONCLUSIONS

Essential Procedures for Implementation

Twelve essential procedures for implementation of a year round school program were established. They are:

1. Specific needs of the school or district are identified prior to consideration of a year round program.

2. School and district staff representatives are involved in the decision to recommend implementation of a year round school program.

3. Information concerning the year round school program is disseminated to all groups within the staff and school community.

4. A year round school steering or task force committee is established for the school or district.

5. Objectiveness and clarity are primary goals of the year round school public information program.

6. Specific goals and objectives are identified for the school or district prior to consideration of a year round school program.

7. Understanding basic requirements of various year round school designs is essential to design selection.

8. Community representatives are involved in the decision to recommend implementation of a year round program.

9. Selection of a year round school design is based on clarification of fiscal and attendance requirements prescribed by existing state statutes.

10. Selection of a year round school design is based on identified resources of the school district.

11. A competent educator is appointed to coordinate planning and implementation activities for a year round school program.

12. Alternatives for the realization of district goals are identified prior to consideration of a year round school program.

Essential Procedures for Operation

Five essential procedures for the operation of a year round school program were established. They are:

1. Refrigerated air conditioning is provided for year round schools.

2. Student attendance schedules are coordinated for all family units.

3. Funds are budgeted for year round provision of instructional materials and supplies.

4. Funds are budgeted for increased utility costs for year round schools.

5. An attendance or office clerk is employed for each year round facility.

Recommended Procedures for Implementation

Twelve recommended procedures for implementation of a year round school program were established. They are:

1. Steering committee members help to identify alternatives for reaching identified goals and objectives for the school or district.

2. Staff attitudes concerning the acceptability of a year round school program are determined prior to board decision for implementation.

3. Steering committee members identify the implementation of a year round school program as a viable means of reaching school or district goals.

4. Public information clearly describes how the year round school will meet identified goals and objectives of the school or district.

5. Cost analysis of year round education is based on a comparison of 10-month costs and year round costs for the same school.

6. Specific year round school design selection is consistent with identified goals and objectives for the school or district.

7. Year round school public information program enlists the aid of all news media for objective and accurate dissemination of information.

8. Community attitudes concerning the acceptability of a year round school program are determined prior to board decision for implementation.

9. Year round school task force or steering committee membership is initiated by the district Board of Education.

10. One specific all-year school design is presented to the staff and community for acceptance or rejection.

11. Mandatory pupil participation is utilized for maximum release of classroom space.

12. Selection of a year round design is based on the age-grade level of students as well as the type of students in attendance.

Recommended Procedures for Operation

Nineteen recommended procedures for the operation of a year round school program were established. They are:

1. Numerically balanced attendance groupings are established for maximum space economy.

2. Minimum and maximum student population projections are established for each facility.

3. Consistent teacher-pupil ratios are established for maximum space economy.

4. Miminum and maximum school capacity projections are established for each facility.

5. Student population surveys are completed for each year round facility.

6. Teacher-pupil ratios are maintained at a 25-1 ratio for elementary classrooms.

7. Organizational patterns for the employment of teachers minimizes the need for frequent changes in teacher and/or pupil room assignments.

8. Ethnically balanced attendance groupings are established for each year round facility.

9. Contract options, based on per diem compensation, are made available for teachers.

10. Preventive maintenance and major repair of facilities and vehicles is scheduled throughout the calendar year.

11. Meal planning and vacation schedules for cafeteria personnel are scheduled throughout the calandar year.

12. School attendance options are available for students when both year round and traditional schedules operate within one district.

13. Teacher-pupil ratios are maintained at a 24-1 ratio for kindergarten classrooms.

14. Funds are budgeted in a given fiscal year to purchase necessary items for an initial time period of the subsequent fiscal year.

15. Employment options are made available to teachers when both year round and traditional schedules operate within one district.

16. Nighttime and weekend work is scheduled for custodial and maintenance personnel.

17. A full-time assistant principal is employed when the facility enrollment exceeds 600 students.

18. Mandatory pupil participation is utilized to maintain consistent student per capita costs.

19. Funds are budgeted for increased furniture and equipment replacement for year round schools.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations which follow were based on the research findings and conclusions drawn from those findings as presented in this study.

1. A similar study should be undertaken to establish guidelines for the implementation and operation of all-year school programs based on a plan other than a year round design.

2. A study should be undertaken to determine if procedures for the implementation and operation of a year round school program change over time.

3. School districts with operating year round school programs should seek to determine if the importance assigned to existing planning and management procedures is consistent for all administrative levels within the district.

4. School districts with operational programs should devise an on-going system for administrative input concerning procedures for planning and management of year round school programs and should give serious consideration to administrative recommendations in the decision-making process.

IMPLICATIONS

Guidelines for the implementation and operation of a year round school program were established by this study. These were set forth in two categories, 1)"essential procedures" for a) implementation and b) operation, and 2) recommended procedures.

Careful study of the guidelines established by this study is recommended for all districts seriously considering establishing a year round program. Any such district should give further attention to adaptations needed by the district to meet its specific needs.

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